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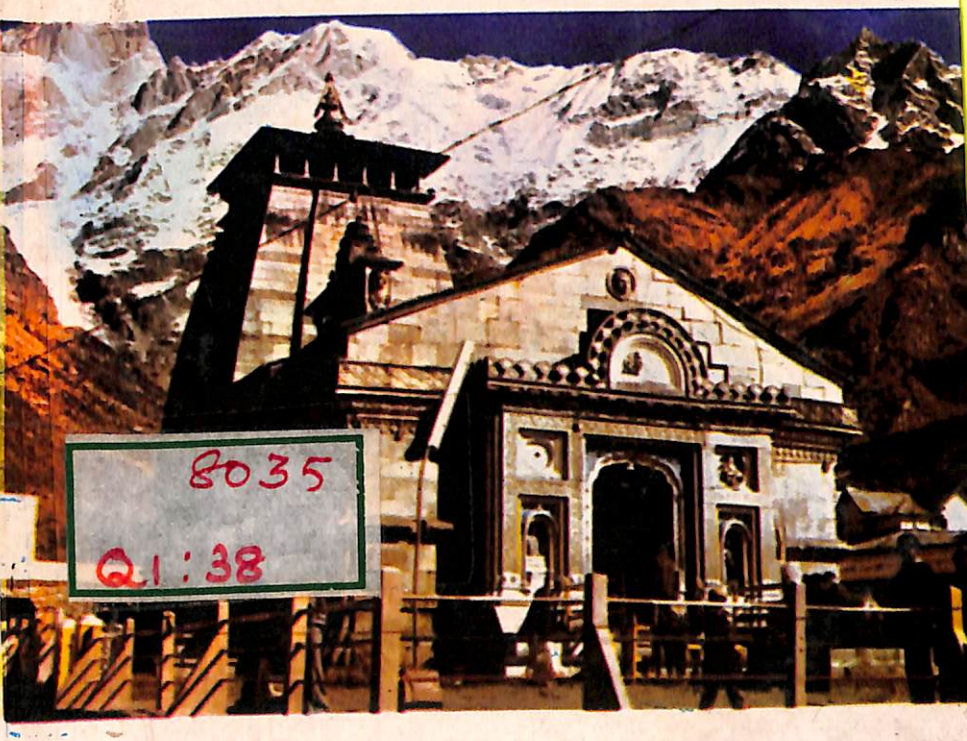
YAMNOTRI-GANGOTRI

KEDAR-BADRI

YATRA GUIDE

WITH PICTURES & A GUIDE MAP



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The Call of Uttrakhand

In the Gloriaus Temple of Nature Maya-
Steeped in sublime beauty of the Himalaya
Enshrined on the Holy River's shore-
God incarnated glorifies the glories of yore.
With silver domes of lofty mountains
glittering all a round,
Amidst radiant glow of Golden Peaks
of the dawn,
Falls ond Brooks, rills ond rivers flowing
leaps ond bound,
Kinnas & Gods singing his Glories with
nature's amusing sound.

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Yamnotri-Gangotri
KEDAR-BADRI
YATRA GUIDE

(WITH PICTURES & GUIDE MAP)

Edited By—M. M. Singh
Preface—Swami Shivanand Saraswati

Rs. 9-00

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Preface
Swami Shivananda

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LATEST EDITION

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HEIGHTS OF SOME IMPORTANT PLACES

1.	Badrinath	10350 ft.
2.	Kedarnath	11750 ft.
3.	Ukhimath	4500 ft.
4.	Triyuginarayan	6000 ft.
5.	Rambara	9000 ft.
6.	Gaurikund	6500 ft.
7.	Madmaheshwar	11474 ft.
8.	Tungnath	12070 ft.
9.	Rudranath	11670 ft.
10.	Ansuyadevi	6500 ft.
11.	Hanumanchatti	8000 ft.
12.	Roopkund	16000 ft.
13.	Chandravadni	8000 ft.
14.	Surkunda devi	8000 ft.
15.	Dudhatoli	12300 ft.
16.	Hemkund (Lokpal)	14300 ft.
17.	Gangotri	10300 ft.
18.	Yamnotri	10500 ft.
19.	Pauri (Garhwal)	5500 ft.
20.	Lansdon	5600 ft.
21.	Vasudhara	12000 ft.
22.	Joshimath	6150 ft.
23.	Uttarkashi	3500 ft.
24.	Gaumukh	12770 ft.
25.	Vaidini	12000 ft.
26.	Vasudhara Falls	13000 ft.
27.	Pandukeshwar	6450 ft.

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Daily Bus Service From Rishikesh
(G. M. O., T. G. M. O.; YATAYAT)

Rishikesh to Syana chatti	213 km.
Syana chatti to Lanka chatti	209 km.
Lanka chatti to Sonprayag	337 km.
Sonprayag to Badrinath	226 km.
Rishikesh to Sonprayag	206 km.
Badrinath to Rishikesh	301 km.

Journey By Private Ambassador Car

Journey	Days	Seats	Exp.
Hardwar to Badrinath	3 Days	5	Rs. 1200
Hardwar to Kedar-Badri	5 Days	5	Rs. 1850
Hardwar to Charodham	10-11 days	5	Rs. 3500

Extra days Rs. 100/- per day. Local Taxes Extra.

Horse/Pony

		Horse	Pony
Hanuman chatti to Yamunotri to Hanuman chatti 26 km.		Rs. 150/-	Rs. 250/-
Gaurikund-Kedar-Gaurikund	28 km.	Rs. 150/-	Rs. 250/-
Govindghat to Ghangaria	28 km.	Rs. 100/- per day	Rs. 350/- Per day
Ghangaria to Hemkund	10 km.		
Ghangaria to Phoolon-ki-ghati	10 km.		

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Himalayan Shrines

PANCH BADRI :

Adi-Badri : On Rishikesh Ramnagar Motor Road, 18 km. from Karan Prayag.

Vridha Badri : At Animath on Pipalkoti Joshimath Motor Road.

Bhavishya Badri : At Subhain beyond Tapovan about 15 km. from Joshimath.

Yog Badri : At Pandukeshwar 24 km. from Joshimath.

Badrinarayan or Badri Vishal : 301 km. from Rishikesh.

PANCH KEDAR :

Sri Kedarnath : 14 km. from Gaurikund.

Madhya Maheshwar : 25 km. from Nala Chatti.

Tung Nath : 5 km. from Chopta.

Rudra Nath : 28 km. from Mandal Chatti.

Kalpeshwar : 9 km. from Helang.

PANCH PRAYAGS :

Deoprayag : 93 km. from Hardwar—Sangam of Bhagi-Rathi & Alaknanda.

Rudrapryag : 71 km. from Deoprayag—Sangam of Alaknanda & Mandakini.

Karanprayag : 34 km. from Rudraprayag—Sangam of Pindar & Alaknanda.

Nandprayag : 21 km. from Karanprayag—Sangam of Nandakini & Alaknanda.

Vishnuprayag : 10 km. from Joshimath—Sangam of Dhauli Ganga & Alaknanda.

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CONTENTS

	Page
The Urge of Pilgrimage, By N. Singh	9
Himalaya, The Abode of Seers and Sages By S. Shiva Nanda	12
Hymns in Praise of Badrinathji	14
Holy Importance of Badrinathji	16
Starting time of Yatra	18
Motor-Bus Service	18
Expenses.	19
General informations.	20
List of Articles required	22
Hardwar	25
Rishikesh	29
Rishikesh to Yamnotri	31
Yamnotri	34
Yamnotri to Gangotri	35
Gangotri	38
Rishikesh to Gangotri	41
Gangotri to Kedarnath	43
Rishikesh to Kedarnath	45
Sri Kedarnath	50
Kedarnath to Badrinath	52
Sri Badrinath	56
Rishikesh to Badrinath	60
Hemkund yatra	61
Valley of Flowers	64

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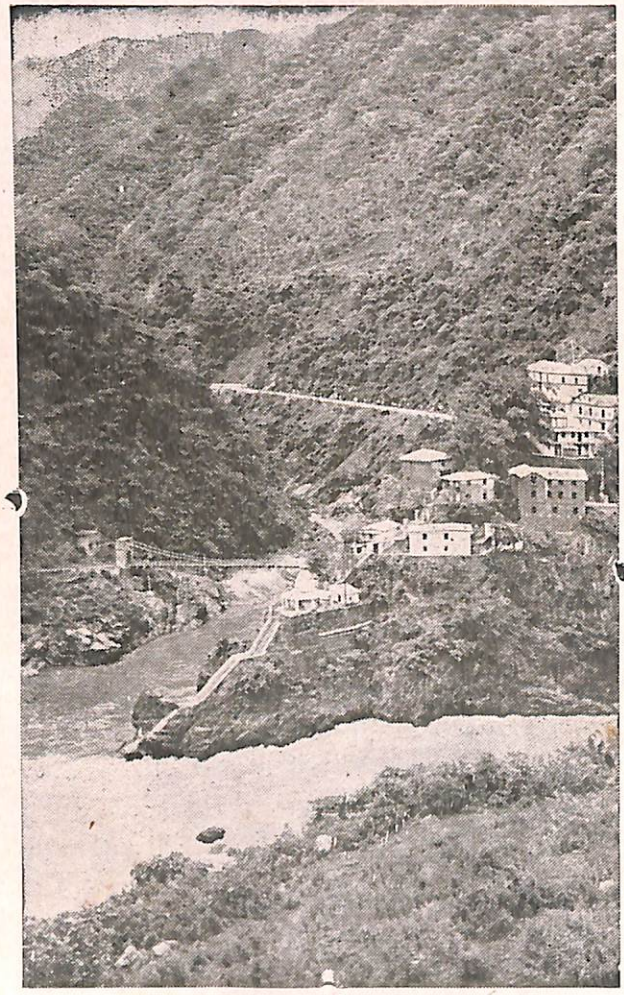

रूद्र प्रयाग

Rudra Prayag

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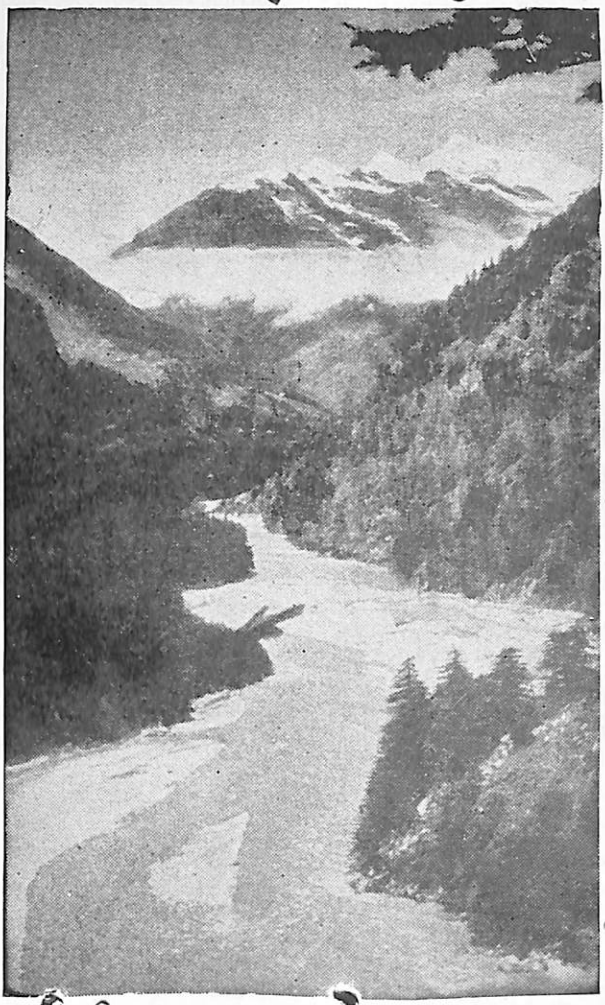

गंगा का उद्गम The Ganga from Himalya

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The Urge of the Pilgrimage

By—N. Singh

Since the man separated himself from the animals, learned culture and graduated himself as a rational-being, he freed himself from the struggle for the bare necessities of life. It was when he was at ease with his belly full that his mind began to work. He searched for the peace of mind. Thus his struggle for the spiritual goal began, which still continues. This urge gave birth to several seers and sages in all parts of the world, but, as India could yield better ease and comfort to the man, the sacred quest was the deepest here. Every man and woman in India seems to be a philosopher, who thinks himself fully able to discuss and comment on the problems of wisdom.

To fulfil this goal of self realisation, pursuit for Moksha—the eternal peace after death, the Indian sages and wise established during pre-historic ages, four shrines of God—Four Dhamas viz. Puri-Jagan Nath, Rameshwaram, Dwarka and Badrinath, as they are generally known at the four corners of the country.

The order to visit these four shrines may differ from person to person, according to their belief. Some people prefer to visit the first three Dhamas, before they go to

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Badrinath. Others give importance to visit Badri-Nath Dham before they proceed for others and take holy waters of the Ganges from Gangotri with them to Rameshwar for shive-linga bath. Now it is obvious that to visit other 3 shrines was easier as compared to the fourth one—that is Badrinath—some 10 years before due to railways and motor-routes. Since the routes to Bardrinath were more dangerous and there was certainly a great risk for the lives of the visitors, this was always put on the fourth number. But at present the motor bus has reached the destination and this journey has also become easier than before. Bardrinath Dham is in north, with great religious importance attached to it. The pilgrimage is termed as Uttrakhand-Yatra, which includes the pilgrimage to Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri, Yamunotri and even to Kailash and Mansarovara. To enter this region of sublime atmosphere and super natural beauty of the Himalayas there are several routes, say via Kotdwara, Kathgodam, Almora etc. But the main route is via Hardwar which is said to be the Gateway to Gods. As the faithful and righteous soul proceeds further higher and higher through the Himalayas, he seems to be getting nearer and nearer to God, shedding off the worldly bondages one by one.

Although, the pilgrim has to pass through narrow passages, steep heights and slippery Paths through rains and snow, but he feels cheerful and pleased in the thin air and clean atmosphere of the Himalayas. This is either due to his faith or unearthly peace of mind that the atmosphere around creates in him. However, the faithful devotee obtains full return in cleaning himself from his sins and rises to spiritual heights and last obtains Moksha.

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Shri Badrinath Dham

The holy abode of Shri Badrinath ji is situated in north, on the Himalayan hills. The region has been termed as 'UTTRAKHAND' in Indian mythological books, with religious importance attached to it. From the times immemorial, this land has been the abode of seers, saints, yogies rishies and maharishies. Many important characters, from the ancient history are said to have visited this place to attain eternal-peace in their lives through meditation. Therefore, the land is known as TAPO-BHUMI—the land for meditation and penance. It is also termed as BHUBAIKUNTH—The Heaven on the earth.

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Himalayas
The Abode of seers and sages

By—Swami Shiva Nand

(Late president of Divine Life Society at Rishikesh)

Though Kashi-Yatra is popular because of the sanctity of Lord Vishwanathas' Holy Shrine situated in easily accessible Benaras on the plains, Kailas Yatra is just as popular, inspite of the difficulties of pilgrimage, beause of the supreme sanctity attached to the Himalayan Centres of pilgrimage. It is the pious wish of every true Indian—the truly religious Indian—to make a pilgrimage to Bardrinath Dham.

At great expense and greater personal risk, thousands of Indians from all over the county have paid their heart's homage year after year to the Lord Badri Narayan, even when travel in the Himalayan regions was difficult and dangerous. Indeed, life itself was considered insignificant before a chance to lay one's head on the dust of holy Badrinath. Since the day on which (according to Srimad Bhagavata) Lord Krishna commanded his disciple Uddhava to go to Badrikashrama and contemplate on Him—if not from earlier days—people have gone on pilgrimage to this Holy Shrine.

It is often asked how they have benefitted by such an arduous pilgrimage. The answer must spring from the

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heart of pilgrim himself. Spiritual benefit always depends on the heart and its faith—the faith that is the very life-breath of the spirit of man—and that faith without which no spiritual achievement is possible. If a pilgrim heartily believes & is convinced and certain that all his sins will be washed away, that he will attain moksha and get beyond the wheel of Samsara, there is absolutely no reason why it should not prove to be so. Badri Yatra or Uttarakhand pilgrimages can wash off all sins and enable one to get strides towards the Great Goal—self realisation—if one has a firm faith in its glory. But, it is to be remembered that test of this faith is on return from such a pilgrimage. If after the pilgrimage, it is proved that there has been a thorough purge of sins, that all the evil Samskaras have been washed away by the holy waters of the river, that the pilgrim is filled with the spiritual vibrations of the sublime atmosphere he has sojourned in and that he can live a pure life of righteousness, devotion, truth, love and purity, then he has certainly been liberated and the pilgrimage has served its supreme purpose. Some pilgrims—though their number may be small—do rise to such spiritual heights.

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Hymns

(In praise of Shri Bardrinath Ji)

PAWAN MAND SUGANDH SHEETAL,
HEM MANDIR SHOBHITAM.
NIKAT GANGA BAHAT NIRMALA
SHRI BADRINATH VISHWAMBHARAM

O' Lord of whole world ! you are adorned by the temple of snow, situated by the side of sacred Ganges, with the cool breeze and whiff around it.

SHESH SUMIRANA KARAT NISHIDIN
DHARAT DHYAN MAHESHWARAM,
VED BRAHMA KARAT STUTI,
SHRI BADRINATH VISHWAMBHARAM.

The Lord of this world—Shri Badrinath ji—is being prayed day and night by 'SHESHNAG'—the lord of snakes. Shri Shiv Shankar (the lord of lords) even, sits in His meditation. Ved & Brahma (the god of creation) are always singing hymns in his praise.

SHAKTI GAURI GANESH SHARAD,
NARAD MUNI UCHARANAM.
YOG DHYAN APAAR LEELA,
SHRI BADRINATH VISHWAMBHARAM.

Shakti (the goddess of power), Gauri (holy goddess, the wife of Lord Shiva), Ganesh (the god to be worshipped first of all), Sharad (the god of music) and the saint Narad are always uttering in His praise. O' lord of

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whole world, all these holy-characters are worshipping and meditating upon your name.

INDRA CHANDRA KUBER DINKAR,
DHOOP DEEP PRAKASHITAM.
SIDDH MUNIJAN KARAT JAI JAI,
SHRI BADRINATH VISHWAMBHARM.

Lord Shri Badrinath ji is incensed and enlightened by-Indra (the lord of atmosphere), Chandra (the Moon), Kuber (the lord of atmosphere), Chandra (the Moon), Kuber (the lord of wealth), Dinkar (the Sun), Seers and Sages are always singing His victory.

YAKSHA KINNAR KARAT KAUTUK,
GYAN GANDHARVA PRAKASHITAM.
SHRILAKSHMI KAMLA CHANWAR DOLEN,
SHRI BADRINATH VISHAWAMBHARAM.

Yakshas Kinnaras (two heavenly races, whose profession is to dance and sing to please the gods) are showing their novelties and Gandharvas are displaying knowledge before you. Shri Lakshmi-Kamla (the holy wife of Lord Vishnu—the lord of whole Universe) is flapping CHANWAR (a flapper made of the tale of wild ox) on your head.

SHRI BADRINATH KI PARAHT STUTI,
HAOT PAP VINASHANAM.
KOTI TIRTHA BHAYO PUNYA,
PRAPT YEH PHALADAYAKAM.

One can get free of all sins, if he reads these hymns of Shri Badrinath ji. The spiritual gain, which one attains to read these holy-verses, is equal to the pilgrimages of crores of holy-spots in this world.

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The Holy Importance of Shri Badrinath Ji

"O Lord" said Arundhati ji to her husband, "please let me know the holy importance of shri Badrinath ji, which is of my liking and beneficial for the people also. I think this was related to Parvati ji by her husband the lord of lords, lord Shiva. How big is that Badrinath area and what are the gains, if visited by anyone with pure and holy heart ? Please let me know all this in details."

The above discussion was being related to the saint Shaunak by Shri Soot ji—a holy mendicent of the Indian mythology; and that narration continues—Soot ji told the Shaunak that listening to the words of his wife Arundhati, Muni Vashishtha ji concentrated his mind for a moment and said—

O beloved ! even if a person who is full of sins & happens to get a holy sight of shri Badrinath ji, he becomes free of worldly bondages and secures a seat in heaven for himself. But, at the same time, it is not so easy to get that holy sight. Only that person will get the holy sight of shri Badrinath ji who had prayed the Almighty throughout his one hundred births unto this earth and one, who gets the holy sight of lord Badrinath ji from His diadem to the holyfeet, is entitled for Moksha—an eternal stage of peace and happiness—after getting free from the earthly bondages. One, who utters 'BADRI-

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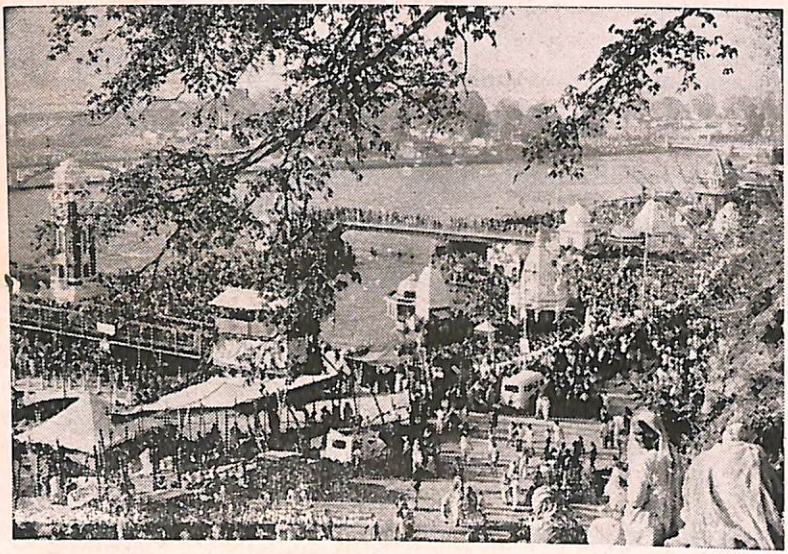
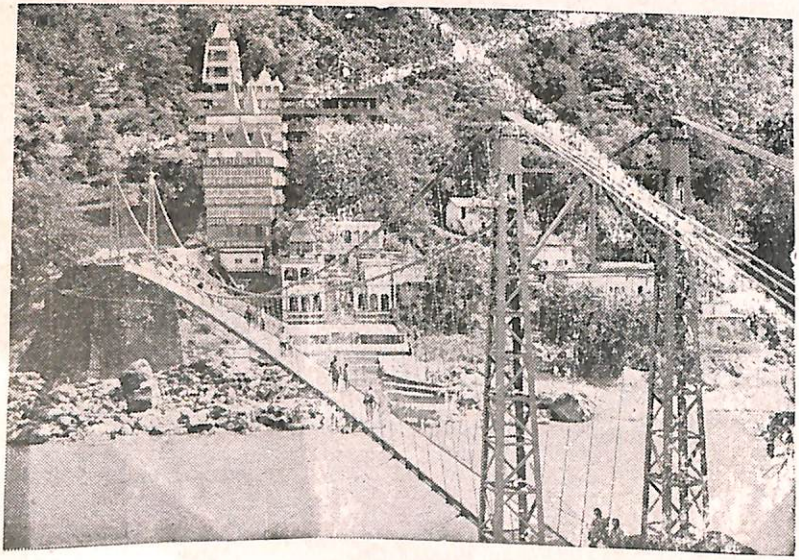


हर की पैडी

Har Ki Pairi



लक्ष्मण झूला

Laxman Jhulla

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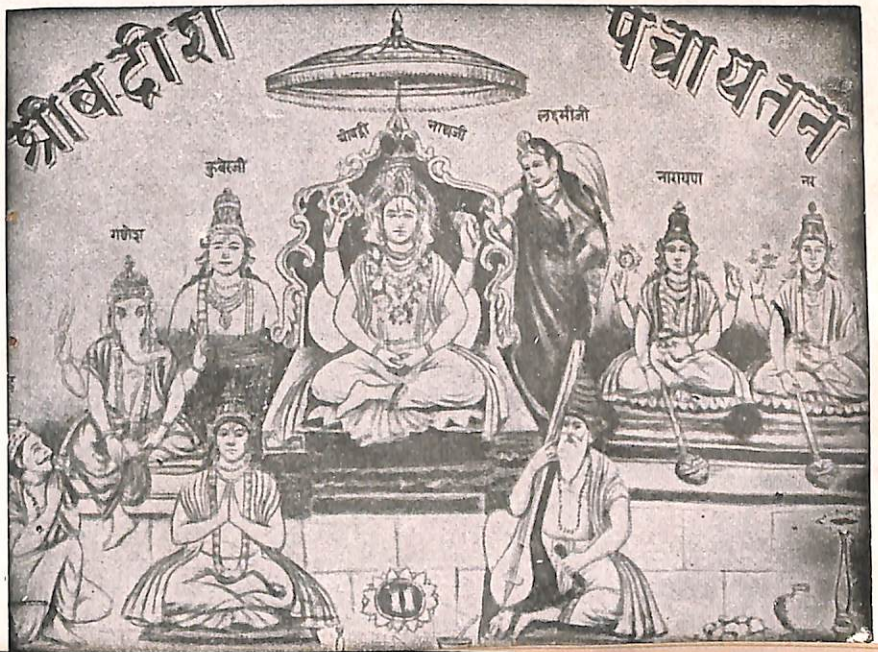
श्री नगर (गढ़वाल) विहगम दृश्य A Bird's eye view of Srinagar



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BADRI' by chance in his life, all his sins are purified. One, who is guilty of the crime of highest degree and could not get free of his sins at any other place, may come here and he will get his sins purified in a moment. Anyone who presents wearing apparels and ornaments to shri Badrinath ji, after offering bath to his holy idol with the sacred waters from the five-holy places, is said to have a seat in heavens, after completing his life.

'O' Arundhati ! whoever offers a handful of 'Naivedya'—(offerings of food to the god) deserves a kingdom, and those, who offer 'Akhand Deep' to shri Badrinath ji, are thought to be the fortunate people. As there is no other god equivelant to the lord Vishnu. similarly, no other offering can please shri Badhrinath ji as much as Akhand-deep (a particular shape of lamp). O' beloved Arundhati ! whoever circumambu'ates the temple of Sri Badrinath ji becomes entitled to the benefit of offering whole-earth to a beggar and those, who go to have a sight of Badrinath ji with their hearts devoted to the lord, after having a dip in the hot-water-tank situated nearby, are worshipped by the gods with their heads bowed before them. The gods themselves tell such a person—O' pious soul ! you are getting the benefit of one Ashwamedh yajna, when they move by one step. One, who takes blessings and Charnamrit (The water with which the feet of the idol is washed mixed with offerings to the deity) of lord Badrinath ji, is blessed and fortunate and worshipped by the gods. Arundhati ! lord Badrinath has the knowledge of all Vedas and can bring out from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. Uniform, unaltered and supreme lord Vishnu reflects his own virtue in His shape. Therefore, people should lead their lives in concentration and devotion of shri Badrinath ji.

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Starting Time For Badrinath Yatra

(a) The time for "Panch-Kedar." (or Badrinath Yatra, via Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath) starting from Rishikesh, is from the 15th of April to the end of July.

(b) The time for Badri-Kedar Yatra, starting from Rishikesh is from 15th of April to the end of September.

(c) The time for Badrinath Yatra only, starting from Rishikesh, is the 25th of April to the 15th of October.

But, for those who are not very keen of being at Badrinath on the first day and who want to avoid snow and cold, for them the more convenient time to start is from the 15th of may to 15th of October.

MOTOR BUS SERVICE TO BADRINATH & KEDARNATH

According to latest informations, Roadways bus service leads a traveller direct form Hardwar to Badrinath. From Rishikesh also, the private buses are available by the following names—

1—Garhwal Motor Owners Union.

2—Yatayat Bus Service.

Tourist taxi services are also available from Hardwar as well as Rishikesh.

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Those people, who desire to go to Kedar Nath, will be required to reach Rudraprayag on bus. An another road starts from here for Kedarnath and the bus service leads a traveller upto Sonprayag. Now from here kedarnath remains about 19 k. m. only. which, may be accomplished on foot, dandies or on ponies.

MOTOR BUS SERVICE TO YAMUNOTRI

The bus will lead you to Dharasu, and then to Hanuman Chatti 209 k. m. via Dandalgaon. Yamunotri is 13 k. m. from here.

MOTOR BUS SERVICE TO GANGOTRI

From Yamunotri you will have to come back to Hanuman Chatti on foot. From here upto Lanka Chatti 202 k. m. by Bus. Lanka to Bhaironghati 3 k. m. on foot. Bhaironghati to Gangotri 10 k. m. by bus.

EXPENSES

As regards the expenses on the food and clothes, it varies according to the pockets of individual. Some can afford quite luxurious food while others will hardly be able to fill their bellies. But usually the ordinary man will have to spend for simple daily food a sum of Rs. 8/- to 10/- A poor can fulfil his mission in ordinary clothes with a sum of Rs. 150/- to Rs. 200/-. The cooliage is usually at the rate of Rs. 5/- to Rs 6/- per kg. But it varies according to the rush of pilgrims. The coolies are given at least 50paisa a day extra and at every tirtha they are supposed to be served with mixed rice for their meals. Moreover, if the pilgrim requires to make halt at his will, he will have to feed the coolies also, and if stays for a longer time he will have to pay them extra for the stoppage. The rates of a pony is about 50/- rupees a day,

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but you can hardly get one. The passengers, desirous of travelling in Kandies or dandies, will be required to hire a separate kandi or dandi for their use.

Kandi is brone by a coolie and is not comfortable. Dandi is carried by four coolies and is very comfortable. It is adviced that six coolies be engaged instead of four for a dandi, so that the distance be quickly covered and the passenger may travel comfortably.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. CLIMATE—(a) Uttrakhand—or the district of Garhwal—is naturally a hilly one but the valleys of the rivers Alaknanda and Bhagirathi are wide and their land is composed of sand-mixed clay, here and there, with a few strips of sandy land. The pilgrim routes generally follow the banks of these rivers. These valleys are surrounded on all sides by the mountain walls, which check the free passage of the air. The height of the route level, for a great length, hardly exceeds 2000 feet from the sea level and the Sun at noon, (or from 11 A. M. to 2 P.M.) in the months of July and August, keeps up heating the valleys with its fiery rays. like span of boiling water. So the climate of these routes as far as Chamoli, on the Badrinath route and Uttarkashi on Gangotri route, is rather hot or extreme. But unlike the heat of the plains, it does not last long. It may change even in a couple of hours or at the very sight of a cloud.

(b) The climate of the rest of the onward journey is warm and moderate except at Yamnotri, Gangotri, Panwali, Trijuginarain, Kedarnath and Badrinath, and a few other important places of similar heights.

The climate of these above-noted places is generally

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cold even in summer. But during daytime in the months of July, August and September it is cool and pleasant.

2. WEATHER—In the cold regions it changes at every moment. Now it shines brightly, soon after it may be seen cloudy, a little later drizzling, raining in showers in heavy showers, nay, it may even rain in cats and dogs. It may, at the same time rain in hailstones at one place and snow may be seen falling at another; and again the next moment snowy peaks may be seen glittering in the bright sun and a rainbow encircling them like a heavenly garland or a necklace for the mountain giant with a gold canopy. Now you are ascending to a height of 9000 feet the next moment you find yourself descending to a level of 3000 feet (from the sea level). At one time you are passing throught dense forest of ever-green trees and at another through a glen, a wider valley, crop fields or through barren tracks and the like again. Now you may be on northern side of a mountain and a few hours journey may take you to the southern slope of the same mountain. It may be shady on one side and shining brightly on the other. These and other natural features make a constant change in the weather like a weather cock, which lightens the pains of the weather like a weather cock. which lightens the pains of the journey.

3. FOOD-STUFFS—Practically, at all the halting places all sorts of food-stuffs are available, and at Devaprayag, Srinagar, Karanprayag, Chamoli, Badrinath and Tehri, one can find as many varieties of the commodities of life as may be found at Hardwar or Dehradun. So it is useless to take more than is necessary for a few days and that only to serve at such places where it cannot be had, due to rush of pilgrims.

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4. LODGING—(a) There are Inspection Bungalows, throughout the route to Badrinath and other holy places. Permission to use them should be obtained from the Engineer P. W. D. Pauri Garhwal U. P. or the Tehri Darbar (as the case may be) before due time.

(b) There are Dharamshalas of the Kshetra of Baba Kali-Kamli-Wala at all important places, besides, there are Chatties temporary halting place consisting of huts, airy-accommodations, neat and clean), prepared by the village banias, at convenient places (generally at 4 to 10 k. m) The owners of these Chatties also keep a sufficient stock of necessary cooking utensils, but they only supply to those who buy the food-stuffs from them, and at all the important places there are also the houses and Dharamshalas of the Pandas of those places.

5. CLOTHING—After a thorough study of this book, one can find out that there are only a few portions of the whole journey (from 6 to 10 k. m. of distance), near each sacred place, which are really cold and need sufficient woollen clothings, beddings and coverings etc. But it may be borne in mind that at these places there are houses of pandas, temple authorities and the dharamshalas of Kshettras and others, where blankets are supplied to the needy pilgrims. However, one should take with him all the necessary articles as per list given below, as far as possible, adopting a policy of taking the minimum number of articles in the minimum quantity, according to his status and mode of living.

LIST OF ARTICLES REQUIRED FOR THIS YATRA

2 Blankets, 1 Dari or ordinary blanket, I Woolln Wrapper, 2 Chadars (sheets), 1 Raincoat, 2 sets of Shirts

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and Banians both woollen and cotton, 1 Woollen Sweater, 2 Towels, 1 Water-proof sheet (3 yards), 1 Hill-stick, 1 Umbrella, 1 Torch, 1 Pr. Rubber shoes, 1 small Rope, Articles of Bhenta (offerings)—Some silk cloth, Misri Chhoti ilaichi, Dhoop Agarbatti, Sandal wood, Kesar and the like.

Some dry fruits and patent medicines of daily use and other sundry articles according to your taste.

6. COOLIAGE—The pilgrims are requested not to deal with the coolies directly, nor should they take them without registering them, as their going in unknown areas with un-registered coolies may prove harmful to them. A few cases in the past have necessiated the establisment of a Coolie Agency after due consultations with the authorities of the districts of Dehradoon, Saharanpur and Garhwal, under the control and supervision of the Tehri Durbar.

7. VIEWS WHILE WALKING—One thing at a time and that is done well, is a very good rule as many can tell. So while travelling in these hills, please never try to divert your attention towards any seenery or howsoever sublime beauty, charm or attraction, as the practice may prove harmful and you may tumble down or perhaps loose your life even, unless you are borne by some comfortable conveyance.

Walk while you walk & stand while you see

8. A REMEDY FOR FATIGUE—At the end of each day's journey, if you feel yourself tired and pain in your feet, you may wash them with salt mixed hot water and then rub them with oil.

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9. "THINK BEFORE YOU LEAP"—Please mark weather conditions before starting for further journey from your halting place, as generally, it is stormy or windy in the afternoons in the months of April and May. During rains too, try to avoid walking while it is raining and specially be very cautious at Belak and Panwali.

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Hardwar

THE GATEWAY TO THE HEAVEN

Hardwar or Haridwar, which is one of the holiest places for Hindus in india. It is significant that pilgrims go from Haridwar to Sri Kedarnath and Sri Badrinath, as Har is Shiva. Hari is Vishnu and Dwar means gate. So it is the gateway to Sri Kedarnath and Shri Badrinath- the holy Shrines of Har and Hari. Many years ago it was called Kapilsthan after the great sage Kapil, who lived and meditated here, for a period. It also had the name of Mayapuri.

Hardwar is the home of ashrams and dharamshalas which have been established by Sadhus and rcligious institutions. It is a city of great religious significance and everyday large number of pilgrimes arrive and depart. Legend has it that the yakshas and the devas had the great darshan of Lord Vishnu here. Every twelve years the Kumbh mela and after six years the Ardh Kumbh mela (half Kumbh) are held when lacs of pilgrims from all over India throng the ghats of the Ganga.

Here at Hardwar, the mighty Ganga hurries down from the hillls to the luxuriant ridges of the Himalayas. The Ganga is worshipped as the "holy mother" and believed to be the cleanser of all sins. From early morn to late at night, hundreds of pilgrims take the holy dip, worship the sacred Ganga and perform puja. Each evening

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hundreds of devotees attend the grand Arti performed at Har-ki-pauri. This is an emotional experience as the pilgrims gather together in an air of reverence and devotion, on the floodlit ghats of the Ganga, to offer their prayers to the Supreme Being. This ghat, Har-ki pauri, is named after the charan or footprints of Hari (Vishnu) impressed on a stone set into the upper wall of the ghat.

The Temples of the Ganga, Shankaracharya, Nave Graha and the Baraha Khamba are near Har-ki-Pauri. Other temples which have legendary importance are Shrawan Nath, Maya Devi, Chandi Devi, Mansa Devi is atop a hill in picturesque surroundings.

Like other religious places the pandas here can arrange accommodation, puja and sightseeing for their traditional yajmans. They keep an up-to-date record of their yajmans. So it is quite easy for visitors to see if their ancestors had made a pilgrimage to Hardwar. Some of the pandas are great pundits of the Hindu religion and philosophy and well-versed in public relations.

There is plenty of accommodation, a good market with vegetarian restaurants and shops.

PLACES WORTH VISITING

BRAHM KUND—The name of the kund at Harki Pairi is Brahma Kund. This is the place where the celestial waters are said to flow and religious minded Hindus gather from all parts of india and abroad

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to have a dip in it, to free themselves from the bondage of the world.

SUBHASH GHAT, GAUGHAT - KUSHAVART GHAT & SHARVAN NATH GHAT—are situated to the south of HARKI PAIRI adjoing to each other.

BHIM GODA TANK—At a distance of about 1k.m. from Harki Pairi the sacred tank is situated with the holy waters.

SAPTA SAROVER—(Sapta Rishi Ashram) 4 k.ms. towards the north from Harki Pairi, the Holy Ganga is bifurcated in 7 Streams Nearby the Ashram is recently made and dedicated to the 7 Rishis of Hindu mythology.

MANSA DEVI & CHANDI DEVI—The temples are situated at the top of the hills towering both sides of the city.

KANKHAL—Five K. ms. from Harki Pairi on the banks of Neel Dhara, the Ganges River, the town of Kank hal is situated. The place was once the capital of King Daksh the father of Parvati, who burned herself in the sacred fires of the yagya of King Daksha. This is very old place. The temple of Daksheswar Mahadeva is the Place of importance, alongwith Sati Ghat. The place has always been mentioned in old histories and Puranas.

DAKSHESWARA MAHADEVA—The old temple dedicated to Lord Shiva is situated on the banks of the Ganges, where the sacred waters of the River seem to touch the feet of the Lord. The temple is said to have been erected in commemoration of Mahadeva coming

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down from Kailash for the help of Goddess Sati ; when Sati burned herself in the fires of the Yajna of Daksha. Lord Shiva was prayed and worshipped here by the Gods to save the life of Daksha.

Devotees and pilgrims gather here in the month of Shrawan and on Shiva-Ratri festivals, to sprinkle Ganga-jal on Shiva Linga enshrined in the temple.

Daksha Ghat is the bathing place attached to the temple.

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Rishikesh

Rishikesh is the gateway to the Kingdom of the Gods—Sri Badrinath, Sri Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri. The yatris begin their pilgrimage from here.

Known from medieval times as a holy place. Rishikesh is famous all over the world as an abode of saints and sages, and it is also a centre of ashrams and dharamshalas.

Founded in 1936, Swami Shivananda's Ashram is the Headquarters of the Divine Life Society and this is an institution of international repute. Swamiji has written numerous books on various aspects of spiritualism and he has thousands of devotees and disciples throughout the world. The ashram has temples, a meditation centre, lecture halls, a hospital and living compartments. The Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy, which is the teaching and trainnig wing of the Society, has in its staff a group of learned and selfless monks, those are proficient in distinct type of yoga.

SAWARG ASHRAM & GITA BHAWAN

The well known Swarg Ashram was built by Swami Atma Prakash Kali Kamli Wale and a number of devotees visit this ashram every day. The splendid buildings of Gita-Bhawan is quite near to this Ashram. In this bhawan chapters of the Bhagwat-Gita and extracts form the Ramayana have been inscribed on its walls.

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PARMARTH NIKETAN

Other important ashrams are the Parmarth Niketan which was built by a Maharaja of Shahajahanpur & Kailash Ashram etc. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi has the Head-quarters of his Transcendental Meditation Centre at Swargashram. Swami Premvarni, Swami Ram and many more holy men have set up their ashrams here.

Most of these ashrams are charitable and benevolent religious institution. Recently some of the ashrams have extended their activities to the remote corners of Uttarakhand.

The Rishikesh Complex consists of there distinct areas known as Rishikesh. Muni-Ki-Reti and Swargashram situated along the banks of the Ganga. These three units are under separate local Bodies.

OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST

LAKSHMAN JHULA—7 kms. A suspension bridge which was built over the Ganga in 1939.

LAKSHMAN TEMPLE—6 kms. Lakshman, the younger brother of Lord Rama, penanced here.

PUSHKAR TEMPLE—2 kms. Newly constructed temple

BHARAT TEMPLE—2 kms. an ancient temple is located in the centre of Rishikesh.

RISHIKUND AND RAGHUNATH TEMPLE—2 kms. It is believed that Lord Rama bathed here.

SHATRUGHAN TAMPLE—5 kms. An ancient temple dedicated to Lord Shatrughan.

ANTIBIOTICS PROJECT. VIRBHADRA—7 kms. Permission to visit the plant can be obtained from the General Manager.

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Rishikesh to Yamunotri

Yamunotri can be visited from Dehra Dun as well as Rishikesh, but the real atmosphere of yatra can be felt at Rishikesh alone. Whereas, car owners and parties chartering full vehicles may wish to go via Dehradun and Mussoorie, as they feel the route more interesting. Pilgrims who have to depend on public transport have no other alternative but to start the journey from Rishikesh.

RISHIKESH TO YAMUNOTRI

How to Get There

PALACE	Altitude (m.)	Distance (km.) (Point to point)	Distance (km.) (progressive)
Rishikesh	340	—	—
Narendra Nagar	1067	16	16
Chamba	1524	46	62
Tehri	770	21	83
Dharasu	1036	37	120
Brahmakhal	1158	15	135
Barkot	1828	40	175
Sayanachatti	1982	29	204
Hanumanchatti	2134	5	209
Phoolchatti	2561	5	214
Jankibaichatti	2576	2	216
Yamunotri	3323	6	222
Rishikesh to Hanumanchatti		209 kms. motor	
Hanumanchatti to Yamunotri		13 kms. on foot	

WHEN TO Go : May to June and September to October

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NARENDRA NAGAR

About 2 kms. from Rishikesh at Muni-ki-Reti the road bifurcates—one road goes to Gangotri and Yamunotri and the other to Sri Kedarnath and Badrinath. This was once the capital of the old State of Tehri, and the palace of the former Maharaja, Narendra Shah of Tehri. Also most of the district offices of Tehri Garhwal are located here.

CHAMBA

Chamba is a delightful place with a pleasing climate during the summer months. On a clear day one can see the impressive Bandarpoonch Peak and some snow on the mountain range. From Chamba a road leads to Mussoorie about 55 kms.

DOBATA

Dobata is 17 kms. from Chamba and 79 kms. from Rishikesh. The roads to Uttarkashi and Srinagar meet here. The town of Tehri is 4 kms. from here.

TEHRI

This romantic old capital of Tehri Garhwal was foun ded by Maharaja Sudarshan Shah and wonderful old palaces of the former rulers are to be found here.

Tehri is the junction of four important roads, those lead to Deoprayag, Uttarkashi, Srinagar and Tilwara. When coming from Rishikesh (83 kms. from Tehri) the road to Uttarkashi and Dharasu bifurcates at Dobata 4 kms. from Tehri.

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जोशीमठ (शंकराचार्य मन्दिर)

Joshimath

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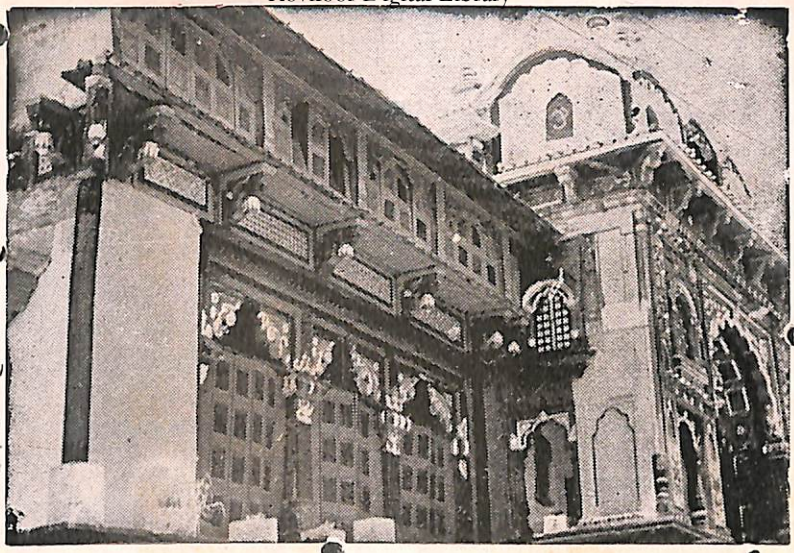

बद्रीनाथ मन्दिर

Badrinath Temple

केदार नाथ मन्दिर

Kedarnath Temple

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DHARASU

Dharasu is situated in the district of Uttarkashi. A road from Mussoorie (60 kms) meets here. There is a Dharamshala and Kshettra of Baba Kali-kamli-wala.

From this place one road goes straight to Uttarkashi 30 k.m. along the bank of Bhargirathi, and the other leads to Yamnotri.

BRHMAKHAL

15 km. from Dharasu and 135 kms from Rishikesh. This is a small hamlet with only a few shops.

BARKOT

It is from Barkot that the road to Yamunotri starts wending its way along the banks of the Yamuna, and the roads from Mussoorie and Kalsi meet here.

Note : On the Yamunotri route, Barkot is the last town where electricity is available.

SAYANA CHATTI

The trail from Barkot leads all allong the banks of river Yamuna, through a valley of lush-vegetation and the pretty hamlets of Gangani and Kuthnaur, to the halting place of Sayanachatti, some 29 km. away. It is a small busy village, nestling in the woods on the banks of the Yamuna, where the villagers from the surrounding areas come in search of seasonal work in yatra-days. Gangani is 7 km, from Barkot, and Kuthnaur is 9 km. away from Gangani.

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HANUMAN CHATTI

This little chatti is just 5 km. from Sayanachatti and set in very beautiful surroundings. A 13 km. trek to Yamunotri starts from here. Bhepha or Kharsali is 5 km. and Yamunotri 8 km.

YAMUNOTRI

The Temple of Yamunaji is the main temple of worship. Near this temple there are a few hot water springs where the water gushes out of the mountain-cavities at boiling point. Surya-Kund is the most important Kund. A pinch of rice or potatoes, tied loosely in a cloth, are dipped in it and after a few minutes when taken out completely cooked. These are taken home as prasad. Near the Surya Kund there is a shila called Dibya-Shila which is worshipped before puja is offered to Yamunaji.

Nearby is the Jamuna Bai Kund—built about 75 years ago—which is used for a holy bath. The water is pleasantly warm and relaxing.

THE PANDAS OF YAMUNOTRI

The pandas of Yamunotri come from the village of Kharsali, which is on the other bank of the Yamuna near Jankibaichatti. The entire administration of Yamunotri is in their hands. In addition to performing their usual religious rituals, they are the pujaris of the temple.

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YAMUNOTRI TO GANGOTRI
HOW TO GET THERE

Place	Altitude (m)	Distance (km.) (point to point)	Distance (km.) (progressive)
Yamunotri	3323	—	—
Hanumanchatti	2134	13	13
Sayanachatti	1982	5	18
Barkot	1828	29	47
Dharasu	1036	55	102
Uttarkashi	1158	26	128
Gangori	1219	4	132
Maneri	1372	6	138
Bhatwari	1677	19	157
Gangnani	1982	14	171
Sukhi	2744	18	189
Jhala	2439	7	196
Harsil	2591	6	202
Lanka	2652	13	215
Bhaironghati	2652	3	218
Gangotri	3140	10	228

Yamunotri to Hanumanchatti 13 km. trek.
Hanumanchatti to Lanka 202 km. motor
Lanka to Bhaironghati 3 km. trek
Bhaironghati to Gangotri 10 km. motor

WHEN TO GO—May to June and September to October

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The journey from Yamunotri to Gangotri entails a journey back to Barkot, and then to Dharasu which is the bifurcating point for Yamunotri and Gangotri. At Dharasu, the main road from Rishikesh to Gangotri must be followed.

Note : For description of route Yamunotri to Barkot please refer to section—Rishikesh to Yamunotri.

DHARASU

Dharasu is 120 km. from Rishikesh and 102 km. from Yamunotri.

UTTARKASHI

Moving further on upto Uttarkashi, one passes along the scenic and fertile bafiks of the Ganga, a distance of 26 km. from the junction point Dharasu. Uttarkashi, with a population of 10,000 (approx.) is a prosperous town with modern amenities and is the Headquarters of the district of the same name. It is situated on the banks of the Ganga and is a town of historical monuments, temples, ashrams and dharmshalas.

Amongst its many temples, the Temple of Lord Vishwanath is the most important. Shiv is the presiding deity of this town and is worshipped in the morning and evening at this ancient temple.

The day of Makar Sankranti falls in the month of January and at this time a fair is held which lasts for seven days.

About a mile from Uttarkashi, at a place known as Ujali, there is a colony of sadhus and sanyasis, some of those are reputed to be scholars.

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GANGORI

This is a charming village, just 4 km. from Uttarkashi and on the route to Gangotri.

MANERI

Six kilometres from Gangori and 158 km. from Rishikesh is the site where a concrete dam (39meters high) is being constructed to divert the waters of the Bhagirathi into a tunnel.

BHATWARI

This is an important town, 25 km. from Gangori on the Rishikesh-Gangotri route. From here a bridle path coming from Gangotri, branches off to Shri Kedarnath.

GANGNANI

There are hot water springs where one can take a bath for relaxation and rejuvenation.

Gangnani is located 14 km. from Bhatwari. 171 km. from Yamunotri and 191 km. from Rishikesh.

SUKHI

Sukhi is noted for its seasonal fruits—apples, apricots etc. are grown in abundance. Sukhi 18 km. from Gangnani.

JHALA

The journey down to Jhala from Sukhi is a dramatic and exciting descent of 305 m. in a distanee of 7 km. The road crosses over to the left bank of the Bhagirathi and runs parallel to it for several kilometres.

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HARSIL

Harsil is 6 km. from Jhala and it is indeed a beautiful sylvan hamlet. Winding shady roads, swinging coniters, sun-kissed mountains and scintillating Bhagirathi.

LANKA

Lanka is a little halting place, 13 km. from Harsil, and at present it is the last motor head and all types of vehicles can go upto here only. The next station; Bhaironghati, is 3 km. away and the route must be covered on foot.

TREK ROUTE

LANKA TO BHAIRONGHATI—3 KM.

This 3 km. trek from Lanka is along a fascinating zig-zag path—lined with wooden fencings and studded with beautiful high-altitude deodars.

From Bhaironghati, buses and jeeps are available for the remainder of the pilgrimage to Gangotri, for a distance of 10 km. only.

GANGOTRI

WHERE THE GANGA DESCENDED ON EARTH

The tiny village of Gangotri (altitude 3140 m. above sea-level) is full of giant deodars and conifers. On the right bank of the Bhagirathi is the holy temple of Ganga, whilst on the left bank there are a few ashrams and dharmshalas. The Temple of Ganga was constructed by the Gorkha General, Amar Singh Thapa. It is

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said that the General appointed the pandas of Mukhwa, as the pujaris and donated the entire forest land between Mukhwa and Gangotri to the temple as goonth.

HOW GANGA DESCENDED FROM HEAVEN

The great task of bringing the Ganga on earth started. Anshuman failed and so did his son Dilip, but the grandson Bhagirath was very determined, who meditated at Gangotri. After several years of intense meditation, the Ganga descended from Heaven and remained in suspense in the coils of Shiva's hair. Now King Bhagirath meditated to propitiate Shiva. Shiva being pleased, released the Ganga as three streams—one of which came on earth in the form of the Bhagirathi, The Ganga's waters touched the ashes of the 60,000 sons and they rose to their eternal rest. The slab of stone on which King Bhagirath is believed to have meditated is called the Bhagirath Shila and is located near the Temple of Ganga.

When one takes a "holy dip" in the Ganga at Gangotri, it is believed that all sins are cleansed away with the waters of Ganga one is literally cleansed, soul and body.

PUJA AT TEMPLE OF GANGA

At Gangotri, Puja is offered to Gangaji. This is performed both in the temple and on the bank of the river. All puja are preceded by a holy bath in the river. The Pujaris are brahmins from the village of Mukhwa. Every year ten of them are selected in rotation to take charge of all the functions concerning the temple.

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Unlike Sri Badrinath, the office of Rawal does not exist here and the pujaris perform the duties of Rawal.

TEMPLE ADMINISTRATION

The entire administration of the temple and the town is in the hands of a local commitee made up of 5 members—the tehsildar of the area, the gram—pradhans of the villages Mukhwa and Dharali, and two leading sanyasis of Gangotri.

GAURIKUND

Here at Gaurikund it is possible to romance a little and imagine the Ganga falling from the hair coils of Lord Shiva into the Kund.

DEV GHAT

Just across the kedar Ganga—a small stream which meets the Bhagirathi at Gangotri—are the brilliant snow peaks known as Dev Ghat.

THE TREK TO GAUMUKH

The trek from Gangotri starts with an easy climb along a route which is full of unexpected delights. Nine kilometers from Gangotri is beautiful Chirbasa, garbed in all its greenery.

GAUMUKH—The Glistening Glacier

Set in the heart of the Gangotri peaks, the Gaumukh Glacier offers variety in colour—in shades of blue and green, with glistening white floating icebergs is a common feature in June and July. The Gangotri Glacier, which lies at a height of 4255 m. above sea-level, is nearly 24 km. in length and 6 to 8 kms. in width.

The best time to visit Gaumukh is from June to september. The bridle path can be full of ice before June and after the second week of October.

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RISHIKESH TO GANGOTRI

HOW TO GET THERE

Place	Altitude (m.)	Distance (km.) (point to point)	Distance (Km.) (progressive)
Rishikesh	340	—	—
Narendra Nagar	1067	16	16
Chamba	1524	46	62
Tehri	770	21	83
Dharasu	1036	37	120
Uttarkashi	1158	28	148
Gangori	1219	4	152
Maneri	1372	6	158
Bhatwari	1677	19	177
Gangnani	1982	14	191
Sukhi	2744	18	209
Jhala	2439	7	216
Harsil	2591	6	222
Lanka	2652	13	235
Bhaironghati	2652	3	238
Gangotri	3140	10	248
Rishikesh to Lanka		235 km. motor	
Lanka to Bhaironghati		3 km. trek	
Bhaironghati to Gangotri		10 km. motor	

WHEN TO GO—May to Iune and September to October

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RISHIKESH TO GANGOTRI

From Rshikesh to Dharasu, a distance of 120 kms. the road to Yamunotri and Gangotri is the same. From Dharasu, travellers have to follow the direct route to Gangotri via Uttarkashi.

Note : For description of route, please refer to Section—Rishikesh to Yamunotri (Rishikesh to Dharasu) and Section—Yamunotri to Gangotri (Dharasu to Gangotri).

GANGOTRI TO SHRI KEDARNATH VIA SHRINAGAR AND RUDRAPRAYAG

Travellers going from Gangotri to Sri Kedarnath must return to Tehri via Uttarkashi and Dharasu. This journey of 165 kms. is along the banks of the Bhagirathi. At Dobata junction, 4 km. before Tehri, one leaves the road going to Rishikesh and continues on to Tehri.

From Tehri there are two routes going to Sri Kedarnath :—

Route 1. Tehri via Ghansali, Chirbatia, Tilwara to Shri Kedarnath—183 km.

Route 2. Tehri via Srinagar. Rudraprayag, Tilwara to Sri Kedarnath—178 km,

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GANGOTRI TO SRI KEDARNATH
HOW TO GET THERE

Place	Altitude (m.)	Distance (km.) (point to point)	Distance (km.) (progressive)
Gangotri	3140	—	—
Bhaironghati	2652	10	10
Lanka	2652	3	13
Harsil	2591	13	26
Gangnani	1982	31	57
Bhatwari	1677	14	71
Uttarkashi	1158	29	100
Dharasu	1036	28	128
Tehri	770	37	165
Gadolia	770	17	182
Maletha	518	34	216
Kirti Nagar	520	3	219
Srinagar	572	6	225
Rudarpraya	610	34	259
Tilwara	915	9	268
Agastmuni	762	10	278
Kund	976	15	293
Guptakashi	1479	5	228
Nala		3	301
Narayankoti	1601	11	312
Phata	1646	9	321
Rampur	1829	3	324
Soneprayag	1982	5	329
Gaurikund	2591	7	336
Rambara	3262	4	340
Garurchatti	3583	3	343
Sri Kedarnath			

Gangotri Bhaironghati	10 km. motor
Bhaironghati to Lanka	3 km. trek
Lanka to Tehri	152 km. motor
Tehri to Soneprayag	159 km. motor
Soneprayag to Sri Kedarnath	19 km. trek

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TEHRI

The old romantic capital of Tehri Garhwal is located 165 km. from Gangotri and 83 km. from Rishikesh.

GADOLIA

Gadolia is 17 km. from Tehri along a fairly good road.

GHANSALI

18 km. from Gadolia, on a newly painted road, is the small hill town of Gansali. From here a road goes to Ghuttu,

CHIRBATIA

It is a continuous uphill journey, along a good road, for 31 km. to the beautiful mountain hamlet of Chirbatia.

TILWARA

From Chirbatia it is a continuous descent through a magnificent mountain country, a distance of 42 km.

ROUTE 2 TEHRI-SRINAGAR-RUDRAPRAYAG-TILWARA-SONEPRAYAG-SRI KEDARNATH

MALETHA

17 km. from Tehri, the road to Srinagar branches at Gadolia. Then one travels along a good road to Maletha, some 34 km. away,

Maletha is 3 km, short of Kirti Nagar. It is the junction where the road from Tehri meets the main highway going to Sri Kedarnath and Sri Badrinath.

KIRTINAGAR

This small town was established by the former Maharaja Kirti Shah of Tehri Garhwal and it is located

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3 km. from Maletha. It is here that the road crosses the Alaknanda and goes over to the left bank. Only 6 km. from Kirti Nagar is the ancient town of Srinagar.

SRINAGAR

Srinagar is 60 km. from Tehri, 105 km. from Rishikesh and 118 km. from Sri Kedarnath.

Note—For description of Srinagar and Rudraprayag, and routes to Srinagar, Rudraprayag to Tilwara and on to Sri Kedarnath please refer to Section—Rishikesh to Sri Kedarnath.

RISHIKESH TO KEDARNATH

HOW TO GET THERE

Place	Altitude (m)	Distance (km.) (point to point)	Distance (km.) (progressive)
Rishikesh	340	—	—
Deoprayag	472	70	70
Srinagar	579	35	105
Rudraprayag	610	34	139
Tilwara	671	9	148
Agastmuni	762	10	158
Kund	976	19	173
Guptakashi	1479	5	178
Nala Narayankoti		3	181
Phata	1601	11	192
Rampur	1646	9	201
Soneprayag	1829	3	204
Gaurikund	1982	5	209
Rambara	2291	7	216
Garurchatti	3262	4	220
Sri Kedarnath	3583	3	223
Rishikesh to soneprayag		204 km. motor	
Soneprayag to Sri Kedarnath		19 km. trek	

WHEN TO GO-May to June and September to October

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DEOPRAYAG

Deoprayag, 70 km. from Rishikesh, is the first important town on this route. Here the Bhagirathi from Gaumukh and the Alkananda from satopanth unite and become the sacred Ganga. Deoprayag is the birthplace of the Ganga and is considered next only to Prayagraj in its importance as a confluence.

From Deoprayag a flat road goes along the banks of the Alkananda for a distance of 35 km. to Srinagar. It passes through Bagwan, Maletha and Kirtinagar.

SRINAGAR

Srinagar is a developing town with schools, colleges, a university and important offices. As it is very warm in summer the cool waters of the Alkananda are most inviting. Srinagar is 35 km. from Deoprayag, 105 km. from Rishikesh and 118 km. from Sri Kedarnath Excursions : From Srinagar a road branches off to Pauri and Kotdawara. Pauri is a hill station about 29 km. from Srinagar, and Kotdwara is a railhead approximately 108 km. from Pauri.

RUDRAPRAYAG

It is an enjoyable drive of 34 km. from Srinagar to the small, but important town of Rudraprayag which is situated at the confluence of the Mandakini, flowing from Kedarnath, and the Alaknanda coming from Badrinath.

Here also, is the ancient Temple of Rudranath.

TILWARA

From Rudraprayag the road to Sri Kedarnath passes through a tunnel, and then goes along the banks

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of the Mandakini to the first important town in the valley—Tilwara. The road coming from Tehri meets the main road going from Rishikesh to Sri Kedarnath at Tilwara.

AGASTMUNI

Agastmuni—at a distance of ten km. from Tilwara. The sage Agastmuni, who meditated here, is worshipped in the local temple of Agastya.

KUND

Kund is located fifteen km. from Agastmuni and 173 km. from Rishikesh. It is at the junction of two roads, one going to Sri Kedarnath via Guptakashi, and other to Chamoli via Ukhimath.

GUPTAKASHI

Perched at an altitude of 1479 m. above sea-level and just 5 km. from Kund, is the scenic and legendary town of Guptakashi, which is an important place on the routes to Sri Kedarnath and Madmaheshwar.

The pandas of Sri Kedarnath live in the villages near Guptakashi.

GATE SYSTEM

As the road from Guptakashi to Soneprayag is narrow and unmetalled, the traffic is regulated by one-way system, which is popularly known as the "gate system".

NALA

Only $1\frac{1}{2}$ km. from Guptakashi, Nala is a small place where the Goddess Durga is worshipped in the form of Lalita Devi.

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NARAYANKOTI

Narayankoti is one & half km. from Nala.

PHATA

The road from Guptakashi to Phata, and on to Sonprayag, has not been black-topped at yet. Although it needs a lot of improvement, it is suitable for all types of vehicles—except in the rainy season. Phata is situated 192 km. from Rishikesh.

RAMPUR

23 km. from Guptakashi, one passes through an area of majestic and untamed scenery. For several years, this village was the last motorhead on Sri Kedarnath route.

SONEPRAYAG

This little village, is located at the confluence of the Mandakini and the Son-Ganga. Soneprayag is the last motorhead on the route to Sri Kedarnath.

A motor road from Soneprayag to Gaurikund is under construction and is expected to be ready for the season.

THE TREK TO SRI KEDARNATH

The 19 km. trek from Soneprayag to Sri Kedarnath is most thrilling. The route is well dotted with temples where one can receive blessings along the way. At convenient spots there are friendly chatties those offer one a night's shelter. The trekking distance will be reduced to 14 km. when the motor road to Gaurikund becomes ready for ttaffic. The trek will then start from Gaurikund.

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गंगोत्री मन्दिर

Gangotri Temple

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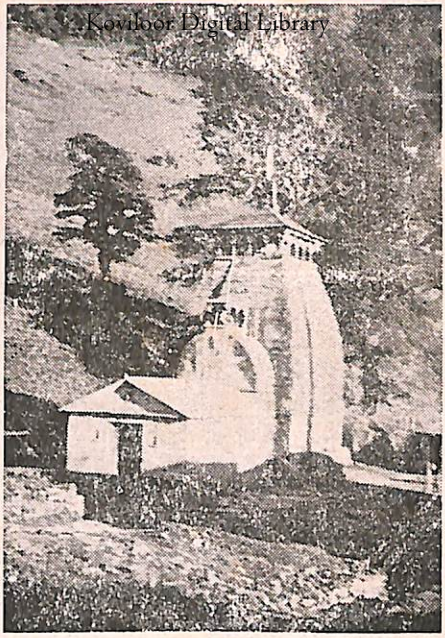
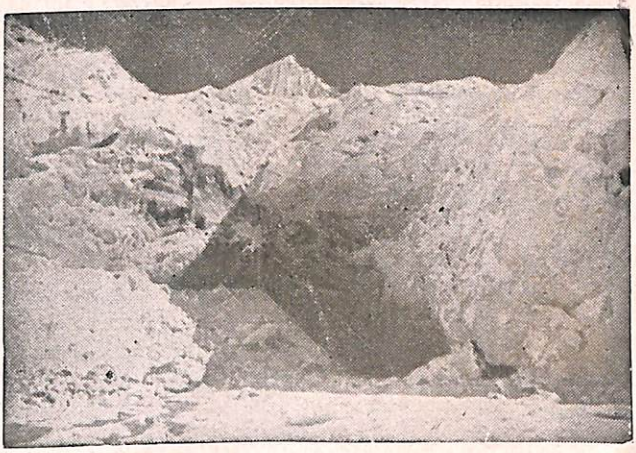


मद्महेश्वर Madmaheshwar



गौमुख Gaumukh

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GAURI KUND

Gaurikund is 5 km. from Soneprayag and 209 km. from Rishikesh. Here is an ancient temple dedicated to the Goddess Gauri, which houses the metallic idols of Gauri and Mahadev.

The religious texts say that the Goddess Parvati meditated here for a considerable time to win a consort in Lord Shive. The cosmic couple were wed at Triyuginarain.

Near the temple there are two tanks of water—one is hot and the other is cold. The hot water comes out of a sulphur rock and some of it falls into the Mandakini flowing nearby.

RAMBARA

The 7 km. trek from Gaurikund to Rambara passes through dense green forests, and near several water falls. From Rambara, it is a very steep climb—a distance of 5 km.—to Sri Kedarnath and pilgrims must check and allow enough time to go straight through to Shri Kedarnath without stopping. If you arrive late at Rambara, stay overnight and continue on to Sri Kedarnath in the morning.

GARUR CHATTI

2 km. from Rambara onwards the scenery changes dramatically. The surrounding mountains are steep, stark and generally bare, and small plants—cacti, orchids and flowers of different colours can be seen along the route.

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KEDARNATH

THE ABODE OF SHIVA

It is an easy and enjoyable 3 km. trek from Garurchatti Sri Kedarnath—it is not steep, just a gentle rise. The Temple of Sri Kedarnath can be seen from a point half km. from Garurchatti. It's an entrancing sight, the temple set in an area of rich grassy land with towering white mountains, mantled with snow, in the background. The devotees are overcome with emotion and prostrate themselves before this vision—at last they have reached their goal and a dream has become a reality. This is the famous Puri of Shiveji. It is situated at a height of 11,500 feet on a marshy plain, on the slope of the Himalayas. There is a Lingam of Shiveji. The pilgrims have to return back upto Nala Chatti, 40 km. and then take the Badrinath road.

HISTORY OF KEDARNATH

After the war of Kurukshetra, the Pandvas set out on a yatra to Varanasi in order to be blessed by Lord Shiva and be absolved from the sin of killing their own brothers—the Kauravas. Lord Shiva, unwilling to give darshan to the Pandavas, fled from Kashi to Uttarakhand and lived incognito in Guptakashi.

On being detected by the Pandvas, Shiva went to Kedarnath, but the Pandavas followed him. He assumed the form of a bull and started grazing amongst the cattle, but even then could not escape detection by the Pandavas. At dusk, when it was time for the cattle to return home, Bhim (of gigantic stature, great courage

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and strength) stretched his legs across the mountains (standing on either side of the Kedarnath Valley) in order to identify Shiva. All the cattle passed under his legs except Shiva, whom Bhim noticed. As Bhim bent down to catch hold of him, Shiva sank into the earth and only his back portion (the hump) was taken in Bhim's hand. Shiva being pleased with the determination of the Pandavas, exonerated them from their sin, gave them darshan and requested them to worship his hump. It is from that date the hump of Shiva worshipped in the Temple of Shri Kedarnath—in the conical Shiva pinda form.

PANCH KEDAR—(as described in Padma Purana)

1. KEDARNATH—at Kedar is the hinder part of the Buffallo (Shiva changed himself into the form of a buffallo, when Bhim chased him).

2. MADDHYAMAHESHVRA — At Maddhyamaheshvra the Nabhi or the middle part of the buffalo-Shiva. This place is 21 km. from Ukhimath (via Kalimatha).

3. TUNGNATH—At Tungnath is the Bahu or hand of the buffalo-Shiva. It is Just on the way to Badrinath and 37 km. from Ukhimatha.

4. RUDRANATH—At Rudranath is the Mukh or the mouth of the buffalo-Shiva. It is about 19 km. from Mandal Chatti.

5. KALPESHWAR—At Kalpeshwar is the Jata or the hair of the head of the buffalo-Shiva. This place is just opposite to Helang Chatti at about 8.7 km. from Helang, on other side of the Alaknanda.

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KEDARNATH TO BADRINATH

When going from Sri Kedarnath to Sri Badrinath it is necessary to return to Kund, from where there are two routes going to SriBadrinath—via Rudraprayag and via Ukhimath.

The first route is the most direct, but less picturesque as one does not have extensive views of the Himalayas—it is via Rudaraprayag, which is the junction of the roads to the Shrines of Sri Kedarnath and Sri Badrinath.

Note—For description of route—Sri Kedarnath to Rudraprayag please refer to Section—Rishikesh to Sri Kedarnath.

RUDRAPRAYAG

Rudraprayag is situated at the confluence of the Mandakni and the Alaknanda. It is 84 km. from Sri Kedarnath and 159 km. from Sri Badrinath.

NOTE—For description of Rudraprayag please refer to Section—Rishikesh to Sri Kedarnath.

GHOLTIR

Ten kilometres from Rudraprayag and 149 km. from Sri Badrinath is a little place known as Gholtir. The border district of Chamoli begins from here.

GAUCHAR

Gauchar, which is 10 km. from Gholtir, has the largest area of flat land in the hills. Once a year a big trade fair attract thousands of visitors from all over Uttarakhand to Gauchar.

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KEDARNATH to BADRINATH
VIA RUDRAPRAYAG

Place	Altitude (m.)	Distance (km.) (Point to point)	Distance (km.) (Progressive)
Sri Kedarnath	3583	—	—
Garurchatti	3265	3	3
Rambara	2591	4	7
Gaurikund	1982	7	14
Soneprayag	1829	5	19
Rampur	1646	3	22
Phata	1601	9	31
Narayankoti Nala		11	42
Guptakashi	1479	3	45
Kund	976	5	50
Agastmuni	762	15	65
Tilwara	671	10	75
Rudraprayag	610	9	84
Gholtir	645	10	94
Gauchar	790	10	104
Karanprayag	795	11	115
Nandprayag	914	22	137
Chamoli	1069	10	147
Birahi	1100	8	155
pipalkoti	1311	9	164
Garur Ganga	1372	5	169
Tangani	1677	6	175
Helang	1524	6	181
Joshimath	1890	14	195
Vishnuprayag	1372	10	205
Govind Ghat	1829	10	215
Pandukeshwar	1829	4	219
Hanumanchatti	2286	9	228
Dev Darshani	3101	13	241
Sri Badrinath	3110	2	243

Sri Kedarnath to Soneprayag 19 km. trek
Soneprayag to Sri Badrinath 224 km, motor

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KARNAPRAYAG

Attractively situated, 11 km. from Gaucher where the Pindar, flowing from the Pinari Glacier, and the Alaknanda merge, is the town of Karnprayag. A temple dedicated to the Goddess Umadevi, is located here.

At Karnprayag there are the Sub-Divisional Headquarters, a Government Intermediate College, Post and Telegraph Office and a branch of State Bank of India. The roads coming from Ranikhet and Kausani meet here.

NANDPRAYAG

Nandprayag is a picturesque and photogenic hamlet set in scenic surroundings at the confluence of the Alaknanda and the Mandakini, just 22 km. from Karnaprayag.

CHAMOLI

The pretty little town of Chamoli is situated on the banks of the Alaknanda. This first route from Sri Kedarnath meets the second route via Ukhimath at Chamoli.

Unfortunately there are no good places for a night-stay. Chamoli is 10 km. from Nandprayag, 147 km. from Sri Kedarnath and 96 km. from Sri Badrinath.

BIRAHI

This delightful fishing spot is located at the confluence of the Alaknanda and the Birahi Ganga, 8 km. from Chamoli.

PIPALKOTI

Pipalkoti is a busy town cradled in the lap of lush

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green mountains and terraced fields. There are simple and clean eating places, open chattis and dharmshalas for a night rest which offer an intimate glimpse of the warm-hearted hill folk.

GARUR GANGA

From Pipalkoti, one travels 5 km. to a small chatti, called Garur Ganga, located on the bank of small rivulet of the same name.

TANGANI

This is a quaint chatti located 6 km. from Garur Ganga and 175 km. from Sri Kedarnath.

HELANG

Helang, 6 km. from Tangani, is a small chatti on the way to Joshimath.

JOSHIMATH

(Jyotirmath, Adiguru Shankracharya's Seat)

The town of Joshimath 14 km. from Helang is the most important town on the Sri Badrinath route and it is a major halting station.

Jyotirmath, the Adiguru's seat, is worshipped by hundreds of pilgrims each day and in the evening Shankracharya delivers the holy pravachan. It is important that pilgrims pay a visit to Jyotirmath—the first math of the Adiguru who established the Shrine of Badrinathji.

VISHNU PRAYAG

At a distance of 10 km. from Joshimath and 205 km. from Sri Kedarnath, one comes to a little place called Vishnuprayag, where the dancing waters of the Alaknanda and the Dhauli Ganga join together.

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GOVIND GHAT

On travelling 10 km. from Vishnuprayag, one arrives in a small centre called Govind Ghat. From here a zig-zag bridle path trails its way for 15 km. to Ghangaria (Govind Dham), which is the base for the treks to the Valley of Flowers and the lake of Sri Hemkund Sahib.

PANDUKESHWAR

It is said that King Pandu, the father of the five Pandavas, lived here during the last few days of his life and attained nirvana.

Pandukeshwar is 4 km. from Govind Ghat, 219 km. from Sri Kedarnath and 24 km. from Sri Badrinath.

HANUMAN CHATTI

Hanumanchatti is 9 km. from Pandukeshwar and it is a small old-fashioned chatti, where a small Temple of Hanumanji is located. It is believed that Hanumanji meditated here and Lord Badrinathji being pleased with him, blessed him with unusual powers and strength. Puri Badrinath is 7 km. from here.

SRI BADRINATH

The journey is done and the barriers have fallen. The Dham, the aim of your journey, the reward of it all.

"The paradise on earth," Badrinath is situated at the height of 10,248 feet above sea level. Surrounded by the snow covered peaks of Himalayas, Sri Badrinath is

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situated on the right bank of river Alaknanda, which is always praying lord Badrinath in its roaring voice. The hot water tank, or the Taptakund is the boon of nature. Pilgrims take bath in this tank. Other hot water tanks are "Narad Kund" and 'Surya Kund'. P.W.D.I.H., Temple Committee—Guest House and Dharmshalas are available.

THE TEMPLE OF SRI BADRINATH

The idol of Lord Badrivishal is made of black stone-shaligram. The details are not well-defined—perhaps the result of weathering, when thrown in the Narad Kund for several years, The Lord is seated in a 'padmasan' posture. Opinions are still divided as to the origin of the idol. The popular belief is that when the Buddhists desecrated the Hindu Temple,they converted it into a Buddhist Shrine and threw the idol into the Narad Kund. Others believe that after the conversion of the temple, the Budhists enshrined the statue of Lord Buddha there and during the Hindu renaissance the statue of Buddha was thrown in the Narad Kund, and it was restored by Adiguru as the idol of Vishnu. The fact that the deity is seated in a padmasan from, a very common form of Buddhists' icons, supports the latter belief. Lord Buddha, in such posture, is called Bodhisatva.

According to Hindu mythology, Buddha is the 9th incarnation of Lord Vishnu and therefore Budha may be considered another form of Badrinathji.

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Hinduism allows the maximum freedom in matters of faith and worship. Hinduism does not rest in the acceptance of any particular form of worship. The philosophy of Hinduism is not meant for intellectual curiosity and vain speculation. It is a guide to the path of life. It spiritualises human existence. The dharamadhikari, or the religious preacher of the temple explains to the devotees that they can see the idol of Lord Badrinathji in whatsoever form they wish. He is Brahma Vishnu, Shiva, Kali, Mahabir, Guru and Buddha—almighty, all pervading and all in one.

The temple is divided into three parts—the garbhgriha, the darshan mandap and the sabha mandap.

The idol of Lord Badrivishal is seated in the innermost part—the grabh—griha. The canopy is covered with a sheet of gold, and this was an offering made by Queen Ahalyabai. The darshan mandap is a small rectangular area where pujas are performed. It can only accommodate a few people. The sabha mandap is an outer hall where the devotees stand for darshan and it is only possible for a few people to attend it.

PUJA

At Badrinath, different kinds of Pujas are performed on behalf of individuals. Every puja must be preceded by a 'holy dip' in the tapta kunda.

Some of the special morning pujas are—abhishek, mahabhishek, Srimad-Bhagwat and Gita path.

Some of the special evening pujas are—arti and geet govind. The morning pujas must be booked the previous day and the evening Puja can be booked before noon.

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DARSHAN

Darshan of Lord Badrivishal is available from the sabha mandap all the time the temple is open. The temple committee posts volunteers at various points to organise the large crowds. The fragrance of the Himalayan—shrubs permeates the air. The chanting of vedic hymns by the pujari and the pandits, together with the chiming of bells creates a heavenly atmosphere—a feeling of complete surrender to the Lord.

One leaves the temple blessed, happy and fulfilled because at last a cherished dream has come true.

TIMINGS for darshan at the temple—

Morning—Opens at 6-30 hrs. with shubh prabhatam and closes at 13-00 hrs.

Afternoon—Opens at 16-00 hrs. and closes at 21-00 hrs. after the divine song—Geet-goviud.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Gate system—

There is a gate system from Joshimath to Sri Badrinath. The first gate is at 06-30 hrs. and the last at 16-30 hrs. The winding road is well-maintained and sharply ascends and descends.

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Rishikesh to Badrinath

Place	Altitude (m.)	Distance (km.) (point to point)	Distance (km.) (progressive)
Rishikesh	340	—	—
Deoprayag	472	70	70
Srinagar	579	35	105
Rudraprayg	610	34	139
Gholtir	645	10	149
Gauchar	790	10	159
Karnaprayag	795	11	170
Nandprayag	914	22	192
Chamoli	1069	10	202
Birahi	1100	8	210
Pipalkoti	1311	9	219
Garur Ganga	1372	5	224
Tangani	1677	6	230
Helang	1524	6	236
Joshimath	1890	14	250
Vishnuprayag	1372	10	260
Govind Ghat	1829	10	270
Pandukeshwar	1829	4	274
Hanumanchatti	2286	9	283
Deo Darshani	3101	13	296
Sri Badrinath	3110	2	298

The route from Rishikesh to Sri Badrinath has been described in two sections.

Rishikesh to Rudraprayag is described in section—Rishikesh to Sri Kedarnath.

Rudraprayag to Sri Badrinath is described in section Sri Kedarnath to Sri Badrinath.

Rudraprayag is the junction for the pilgrimage to the holy Shrines of Sri Kedarnath and Sri Badrinath.

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HEMKUND SAHIB

Hemkund Parvat Hai Jahan
Sapat Shring Sobhit Hai Tahan.
Sapat Shring Tahan Nam Kahava.
Pandu Raj Jahan Yog Kamaya.
Tahan Hum Adhik Tapasya Sadhi.
Mahan Kal Kalika Aradhi.
Ehi Bidhi Karat Tapaya Bhayo.
Dwai Te Ek Rup Hwai Gayo.

Situated at a height of 15,200 ft. above see level, in picturesque surroundings, as the Shabad of Gurubani states, the pious place is sheltered by seven snow clad peaks of gigantic mounts—Hemkund Parvat.

The very name Hemkund indicates the presecne of a tank of snow there.

Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, in his former life by the name Rishi Medhasa (The famous Rishi of Durga Saptashati of Markandeya Purana) had selected this place for penance, where the king Pandu of Hastinapur had also been practicing Yoga.

Rishi Medhasa, While meditating found an inspiration by—

Jahan Tahan Tum Dharam Bitharo.
Dusht Dokhiyan Pakar Pachharo.

And obeying, the Almightly, taking rebirth unto this earth by the name Gobind Singh founded Khalsa, the Sikh Religion.

YATRA TIME—For Hemkund is from mid of August to September last.

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RISHJKESH TO JOSHIMATH 228 Km.

From Rishikesh motor bus leads upto Joshimath as mentioned in Badri-Yatra.

Note—For Hemkund yatra, the pilgrims are required to have their permits from Joshimath.

JOSHIMATH TO GOBIND GHAT 20 Km.

The journey is straight and easily accessible, can also be completed by Bus or Car, if available,

GOBIND GHAT—There is a beautiful Gurudwara with the management of lodging and Langar (food). There is also a Forest's House.

GOBIND GHAT TO GHANGARIRA 15 Km.

The place is situated at a height of 10.500 feet and the journey is to be completed on foot and in groups, as for as possible. After crossing a bridge and an ascent of 5 km. there is Pungaun, where one can get a light refreshment. Further is the dense forest with a difficult ascent of 4 km. upto Bhyundar village. Here is Post Office. New Kalgidhar Dharamshala (Ghangariya) is at a distance of 5 km. from this place.

GHANGARIA—There is a big Forest—Bungalow and a grand Gurudwara equipped with lodging and Langar. The charming beauty of the place is increased more with the long Deodar trees. The cold is enough and the blankets etc. are supplied there from Gurudwara.

GHANGARIYA TO HEMKUND 6 km,

Hemkund is km. on the left bridle path from Ghangariya. The pilgrims are required to carry with them

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a water bottle and some dry fruits, as the whole journey is a difficult ascent. The pilgrims are also advised to be equipped with hill sticks, rubber sole shoes and woollen clothes, as they have to travel through the snow and there is plenty of cold.

HEMKUND

A Gurudwara and Lakshman Temple is situated at a height of 15,200 feet above sea level. Surrounding the place are 7 snow-clad peaks of lofty mountains.

The beautiful lake of clear and sweet water is full of Lotus flowers in the centre and the sweet blooming variety of grassy fields all around the Lake, depict an unrivalled sublime beauty of magnificent grandeur.

GHANGARIYA TO FLOWER VALLEY

One foot path from Ghangariya leads to Hemkund and the another to Flower Valley—4 km. From Ghangariya and 19 km. from Gobind Ghat and is at an altitude of 3352 m. (12000 ft.)

Place	Altitude (m.)	Distance (km.) (point to point)		Accommodation
Joshimath	1890			Rest House, Hotels
Gobind Ghat	1829	20	motor	Gurudwara, Log Cabin
Pulna	1920	3	trek	—
Bhyundar	2439	7	,,	—
Ghangaria	3049	5	,.	Gurudwara, Rest House
Sri Hemkund Sahib	4329	5	,,	Gurudwara

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VALLEY OF FLOWERS

Govind Ghat, which is 270 km. from Rishikesh and 20 km. from Joshimath is the motorhead for the Valley of Flowers. From Govind Ghat to the Valley of Flowers it is a 19 km. trek. Porters and ponies are available for this trek. The trek is one of varied scenic beauty. After crossing the suspension bridge over the Alaknanda, the zig-zag mountain—path, with the gurgling Laxman Ganga stream as a constant companion, trails its way through dense vegetation, whispering forests and by panoramic views of the lovely Kak Bhusandi Valley to the pretty hamlet of Ghangaria (Govind Dham), which is the base for the Valley of Flowers, nestled admidst the giant deodars. As the path from Ghangaria gradually ascends to the Valley of Flowers, glaciers, snow bridges, alpine flowers and wildlife appear at intervals along the route of this 4 km. trek.

Place	Altitude (m.)	Distance (km.)	Accommodation
Joshimath	1890	—	Hotels, Rest House
Govind Ghat	1829	20 Motor	Gurudwara Log Cabin
Pulna	1920	3 trek	
Bhyundar	2439	7 ,,	
Ghangaria	3049	5 ,,	Gurudwara, Rest House
Valley of Flowsrs	3352 (lowest) point		
	3658 (highest point)	4 ,,	

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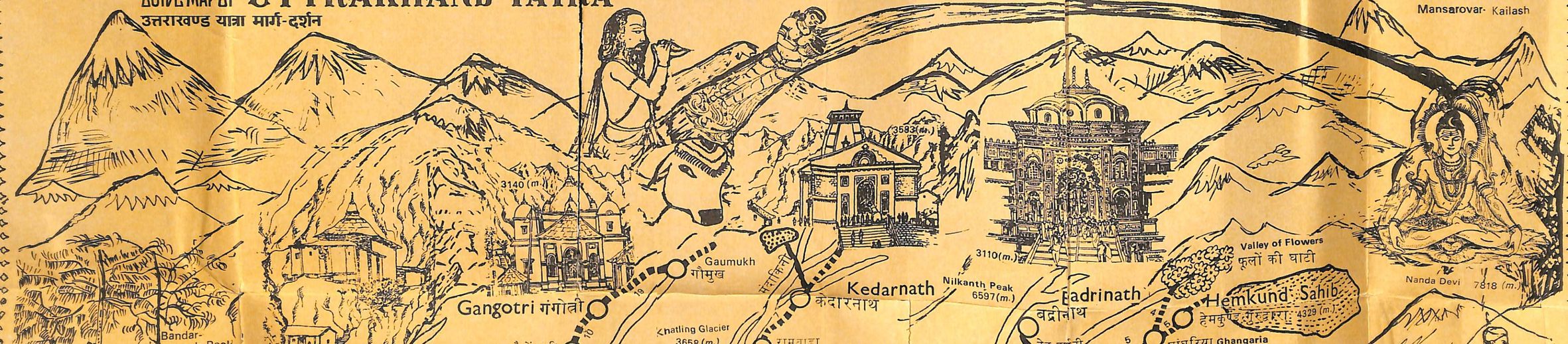
GUIDE MAP OF UTTRAKHAND YATRA

उत्तराखण्ड यात्रा मार्ग-दर्शन

मानसरोवर कैलाश
Mansarovar- Kailash



Routes To The Holy Shrines

Rishikesh to Yamunotri

Rishikesh to Hanumanchatti	209 km.	motor
Hanumanchatti to Yamunotri	13 km.	trek

Yamunotri to Gangotri

Yamunotri to Hanumanchatti	13 km.	trek
Hanumanchatti to Lanka	202 km.	motor
Lanka to Bhaironghati	3 km.	trek
Bhaironghati to Gangotri	10 km.	motor

Rishikesh to Gangotri

Rishikesh to Lanka	235 km.	motor
Lanka to Bhaironghati	3 km.	trek
Bhaironghati to Gangotri	10 km.	motor

Gangotri To Sri Kedarnath

Gangotri to Bhaironghati	10 km.	motor
Bhaironghati to Lanka	3 km.	trek
Lanka to Tehri	102 km.	motor
Tehri to Soneprayag	164 km.	motor
Soneprayag to Sri Kedarnath	19 km.	trek

Rishikesh to Sri Kedarnath

Rishikesh to Soneprayag	204 km	motor
Soneprayag to Sri Kedarnath	19 km.	trek

Kedarnath to Badrinath–

Sri Kedarnath to Soneprayag	19 km.	trek
Soneprayag to Sri Badrinath	224 km.	motor

SKETCH MAP

Not to scale

MOTOR ROAD मोटर मार्ग
RIVER नदीयाँ
ANCIENT TEMPLES प्राचीन मंदिर
TREKKING ROUTE पैदल मार्ग
LAKES सरोवर
DISTANCES IN KILOMETERS

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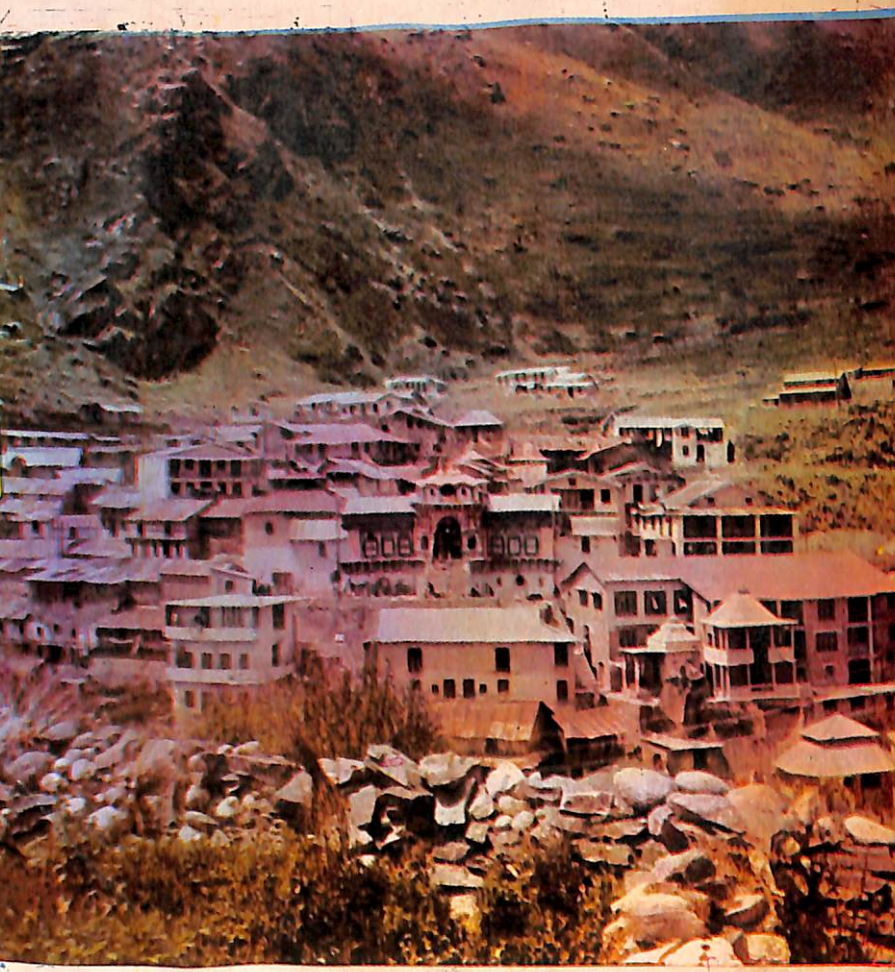
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